and to install meters for all consumers by December, 2001. With the adoption of these measures, it will be possible to substantially reduce losses arising due to power thefts.

Water and Air Pollution by Talcher Thermal Power Station

2250. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that inhabitants of Talcher are suffering from various chest diseases due to the water and air pollution caused by Talcher Thermal Power Station; and

(b) whether NTPC has any action plan to check this pollution?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) and (b) National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) has the following two thermal power stations in Talcher area in Orissa:—

1. Talcher Super Thermal Power Station (2500 MW) (TSTPS) which is under operation since 1995; and

2. Talcher Thermal Power Station at Angul (460 MW 2110 MW) (TTPS) taken over by NTPC from Orissa State Electricity Board in June, 1995.

No specific cases of suffering from chest disease is reported due to air/ water pollution in areas where these stations are located. NTPC have taken various pollution control measures in TSTPS like provid- ing Electrostatic Precipitators (ESP) with 99.91% efficiency, Stack of 275 meter height to control SOx and NOx level, providing closed loop cooling water system for thermal pollution control, dust extrac- tion and dust suppression system in coal handling plant/coal stack yard, providing fully automatic neutralisation system for DM Plant effluent, and Sewage Treatment Plant for treatment of township and plant sewage, providing Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Stations at different locations to contain air quality etc. Further, Multi Lagoon ash pond with zero discharge is under operation in the area. Ecological Impact Monitoring is being done by NTPC through M/s National Remote Sensing Agency.

In regard to TTPS, immediately after taking over, NTPC took several steps in Stage-I units like repair of Air preheaters/soot blowers, chemical cleaning of Unit 1 and 2 and flue gas reconditioning which reduced the stack emission in Stage-I to 350-400 mg/NM3. NPTC has since finalised order on BHEL for retrofitting of additional ESPs in Stage-I Units. Additional ESPs have been retrofitted in Unit 5 and 6 of Stage-II units. The stack emission of these units is

now well within the statutory limit of 150 mg/NM3. Direct flow of ash slury into Nandira river was stopped. Presently, Ash Pond Lagoon II is being used. Order for Sewerage Treatment Plant has been placed by NTPC. Order for ash water recirculation system is likely to be placed by April, 2000.

Contract Labourers Working in NTPC Power and Thermal Stations

2251. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) how many contract labourers are working in NTPC power and thermal stations in the country for more than ten years; and

(b) whether it is a fact that these contract labourers are not getting the statutory benefits?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) does not keep the record of Contract Labour engaged by the contractor to whom NTPC has awarded the contract to carry out specific jobs. After a contract is awarded for carrying out certain jobs, contractor deployes the requisite workmen for carrying out the job. As and when the job is over or contract expires, the Contract Labour are redeployed/disengaged by the Contractor. NTPC has no role to play except to ensure that contractor meets all the statutory requirements like payment of wages, leave, holidays etc.

(b) All contractors who are awarded contract by NTPC are extending all statutory benefits to their employees. In addition, NTPC ensures the same by the following mechanism:

— Contract documents contain stipulation that it is obligatory on contractor to extend all statutory dues/benefits to his/her employees.

— Periodical inspection is carried out by NTPC executives to ensure the same.

— If any violation is found or reported, it is promptly rectified.

Hydro-Electric Capacity in Hilly Areas of Uttar Pradesh

†2252. SHRI MANOHAR KANT DHYANI: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) what is the hydro-electric capacity in hilly areas of Uttar Pradesh and whether Government have decided to launch these schemes as a far-reaching measures to help people to get rid of the costly electricity obtained from thermal;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.